



May 21, 2010

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
United States House of Representatives
H-232, US Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Harry Reid
Majority Leader
United States Senate
522 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Madame Speaker and Leader Reid:

The American Society for Radiation Oncology (ASTRO), representing more than 10,000 radiation oncology medical professionals who treat more than 1 million Americans with cancer each year, appreciates your leadership and commitment to protect access to care for Medicare beneficiaries by stabilizing physician payments. We are writing to voice our support for the Medicare physician payment provisions in the House amendment to H.R. 4213 and for your ongoing efforts to pass a permanent repeal to the sustainable growth rate formula.

ASTRO believes stopping the 21% payment cut scheduled for May 31 is imperative and appreciates your proposal to provide positive payment updates to physicians for the rest of 2010 and 2011 and to guarantee no payment cuts through 2013. We are hopeful that Congress will use this time to achieve a permanent solution to the SGR. ASTRO is very concerned about future payment cuts and their impact on radiation oncologists' ability to effectively run their practices and treat cancer patients. Our support for this temporary solution does not diminish our urgency and commitment to permanently repealing the SGR.

In your words and actions, you have both demonstrated that you will not rest until the SGR is repealed once and for all. ASTRO commends you for your considerable efforts to ensure stable and fair physician payments, and we look forward to working with Congress and President Obama to ensure that a permanent SGR solution is achieved soon.

Thank you again for your leadership on this important issue.

Sincerely,

Laura I. Thevenot
Chief Executive Officer

cc Sen. Max Baucus
 Rep. Sander Levin
 Rep. Henry Waxman
 Rep. Pete Stark
 Rep. Frank Pallone